



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

Governor's Council for Agricultural Development PRODUCER EDUCATION AND INNOVATION WORKING GROUP



MINUTES OF MEETING HELD MARCH 20, 2014

Connecticut Department of Agriculture
165 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, CT 06106

I. CALL TO ORDER

Kevin Sullivan and Jamie Jones, working group co-chairs, called the meeting to order at 12:39pm. Other working group members present were:

Dr. Richard	Fu	Agrivoultion
Bill	Davenport	Nonnewaug Agriscience Center
Dr. Christop	Geiss	Trinity College
Eileen	Hockberg	CT NOFA
Abbie	Maynard	CT Agricultural Experiment Station
Eloise	Marinos	GeoRoots Solar Growth Farm
Charlie	Viens	Charles Island Oyster Farm
Gregg	Wershoven	Mountain Top Mushrooms
Jane	Williams	Board of Regents

The following working group members were absent:

Joe	Geremia	Geremia Greenhouse
Russell	Holmberg	Holmberg Orchards
Susan	Mitchell	CT New Farmers Alliance

Other Governor's Council for Agricultural Development members in attendance were Chairman Steven K. Reviczky. Agency staff included Kurt Neiminen, Linda Piotrowicz, and Jaime Smith.

II. APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY 27, 2014 MEETING MINUTES

A motion was made by Dr. Christoph Geiss, seconded by Jane Williams, to approve the minutes as submitted. The motion passed unanimously.

III. REMARKS FROM COUNCIL CHAIR REVICZKY

Chairman Reviczky thanked everyone for their participation and involvement in the working group and shared highlights from the Canadian innovation trip with those present.

IV. FINALIZATION OF DRAFT DELIVERABLES

The group engaged in an in-depth discussion and began crafting recommendations from the working group to the larger council. The following recommendations were established:

- 1) Fortify the employment levels of field agents at the CT Agricultural Experiment Station and UConn Cooperative Extension to supply pertinent and timely information to Connecticut farmers to ensure crop viability.
- 2) Facilitate working cooperation between regional agriscience centers and post-secondary educational institutions to develop, offer, and promote certificate, for-credit and non-credit agricultural programs to be held at existing agriscience centers statewide; expanding educational opportunities for adult education and youth supervised work experiences.
- 3) Promote the use of innovation through state tax incentives to conserve and transition farmland from a declining agricultural discipline to one of growth to foster economically viable production.

- 4) Request recognition and inclusion of agribusinesses using technology and innovation into the existing programs offered by Connecticut Innovations.

VI. RECAP AND NEXT STEPS

Word-smithing of the recommendations will be done by the working group members via email over the next week and the final recommendations will be shared with the larger council at the April 1, 2014 meeting.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

There was no further business and Kevin Sullivan adjourned meeting at 4:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Jaime L. Smith
3/25/2014

DRAFT